

VZCZCXRO0445

PP RUEHAO RUEHCD RUEHGA RUEHGD RUEHHA RUEHHO RUEHMC RUEHMT RUEHNG  
RUEHNL RUEHRD RUEHRG RUEHRS RUEHTM RUEHVC  
DE RUEHCV #1419/02 3092009  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 052009Z NOV 09  
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3940  
INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHWH/WESTERN HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS DIPL POSTS PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 03 CARACAS 00119

SIPDIS

HQSOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/03/2029

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [VE](#)

SUBJECT: ELECTORAL COUNCIL RECTOR ON 2010 ELECTIONS, TE  
OPPOSITION, AND VOTER FRAUD

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* Missing Section 001 \*  
\*\*\*\*\*

CARACAS 00000119 002.2 OF 003

as Venevision had been intimidated into favoring Chavista  
candidates with their programming. Diaz asserted that the  
imbalance in free media air time between the GBRV and the  
opposition and self-censorship and partisanship by the media  
were the biggest obstacles to establishing a fair electoral  
playing field.

-----  
ELECTORAL REGISTRY FRAUD: MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING  
-----

16. (C) Diaz downplayed opposition complaint about  
inaccuracies in the REP, which was only as good as the  
information fed into it. He noted that much of Venezuela's  
poor majority -- as many as 1.6 million people, or about ten  
percent of the voting population -- do not have physical  
addresses since they live in barrios that are not formally  
zoned and registered. Additionally, many Venezuelans  
registered prior to 1996, when legislation was passed that  
required a physical address to register. Moreover, many  
voters never submit updated name and address information to  
the CNE, and deceased voters often remain on the REP due to  
paperwork delays. Diaz rejected opposition claims that they  
lacked the same level of access to the REP as the GBRV,  
contending that an updated copy of the list was sent to each  
political party every month and that all the information was  
available online, except for voters' addresses, which the  
Venezuelan Supreme Court (TSJ) had ruled were protected as  
private information.

17. (C) Diaz dismissed the opposition's fraud conspiracies,  
claiming that of thousands of investigations of alleged voter  
fraud, the CNE had only established eighteen instances of a  
person voting illegally, such as voting twice in the same  
election. He speculated that some of the most sensational  
allegations might have been generated by the PSUV's political  
intelligence apparatus to discourage opposition voters, who  
would feel that "it wasn't worth it to vote." Diaz argued  
that the opposition's real challenge was to register the  
approximately 1.3 million potential young voters. The CNE  
had not issued any publicity surrounding its latest voter  
registration drive, a fact Diaz saw as an intentional  
decision by the CNE's Chavista majority to prevent the  
registry of youths likely to support the opposition.

-----  
OPPOSITION CANDIDATE SELECTION: NO EASY ANSWERS  
-----

18. (C) Diaz lamented that there was no way for the CNE to force the opposition parties to democratize. He observed that the most "democratic" party in Venezuela, the PSUV, held the most autocratic vision for Venezuela, while those parties with the most progressive political agenda were the most authoritarian in their internal affairs. He worried that important leaders within the opposition who either did not run in the 2008 state and local elections, or who were not favored by their party leaders, would not be selected as candidates in the 2010 elections.

19. (C) When asked about opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez's calls for nationwide opposition primaries to select candidates for the 2010 elections (see septel), Diaz noted Lopez's serious underestimate of the cost and questioned the likelihood of the opposition agreeing to hold them. However, Diaz said the electoral timeline would have a deadline, probably May, to hold opposition primaries, and he suggested the parties seek consensus until that date, and then hold primaries for any remaining contested slots. Diaz said he was looking for ways to minimize the cost of the primaries, which the Constitution requires the CNE to charge non-government entities, so that "cost" did not become an excuse for not holding them. Since the election for AN Deputies involves both a party slate of candidates and a list of individual candidates ("nominales"), Diaz suggested that the November 2008 state and local election results be used to determine the relative weight of each opposition party in the "opposition party slate," and that primaries be used to select the slate of individual candidates.

-----  
CNE Rectors: United on Political Issues, Divided by Personalities  
-----

10. (C) Diaz described the four Chavista rectors as divided into two camps that were not on speaking terms: President

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* Missing Section 003 \*  
\*\*\*\*\*